

Attn: Mr Mamoon Nahas

المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

5 May 1993

Since the beginning of the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Islamic Council has been active in seeking an end to the tragedy that has embroiled so many lives in death and suffering and has lobbied persistently for the Western military involvement which would curtail the crimes and ambitions of the Serbs. A number of meetings have been held at the Council when visitors from Bosnia with first-hand information from the field of conflict have been able to brief the press and the Secretary General has written frequently to Western leaders urging them to intervene to stop the killing of the innocent.

Reproduced below is the Secretary General's letter published in The Independent today.

West must keep the pressure on Serbs

From Mr Salem Azzam

Sir: Your leading article (3 May) concerning Bosnia shows much common sense. As you point out, only the threat of force has brought the final signatures on the Vance-Owen plan. It is a simple question, but as this is the case, why was the threat of force not employed long ago, before 200,000 innocent people died and many more suffered and were "ethnically cleansed"? The many Western statesmen who have continuously advocated no military involvement must bear the responsibility for this tragedy, because they have actively encouraged the Serbs to believe that they could get away with their aggression and their crimes.

You take into account the cynicism shown by the Serbs in signing

previous negotiations and ceasefires. Sadly, this is already proving to be the case with the Athens accords. There are reports today of the shelling of Muslim towns and that ethnic cleansing is continuing. This must be stopped or the accords will be as useless as the other bits of paper, and only the certainty of force being used against them will stop the Serbs from continuing this policy.

Surely, an early time-limit should now be fixed for Serbian withdrawal from all the territories they have taken by force, with an explicit ultimatum that military action will be taken against them if that promise is not kept by that date. The Serbs patently cannot be trusted and must be coerced into compliance if peace is to be a reality in this region.

Yours faithfully,
SALEM AZZAM
Secretary General, Islamic Council
London, SW1
4 May